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## EDITORIAL

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Upon the answer to the question "What is English?" depends the status of the subject. Unless a good and proper answer is found and that right speedily, the place of eminence which it so justly occupies will be taken by what their proponents call the "social studies." Obviously mere drill on correctness—or "accuracy" if you please—cannot justly occupy one-fifth, more or less, of the school course. Competence in the use of the vernacular for practical purposes is better, because more inclusive. It suggests speaking and reading, as well as writing. Next comes useful information—who's who and what he wrote—the modicum of knowledge of things literary which enables intelligence in ordinary conversation and which guides in the choice of one's reading. To these add reasonable emphasis on capacity for enjoyment, not of skilful technique nor of criticism, but of the vicarious experience itself, the phase of life and feeling embodied. This means of course ability to interpret the literary language, the language of imagination and suggestion instead of the language of fact and abstract analysis.

So far the current conception, with limitations which not all accept. But "English" is not merely a form of expression; it is a body of ideals, and sentiments, presented through the most appealing medium possible, the art of literature. In this sense "English" is for us truly American, as, indeed, it is now often called. The supreme function of it is to orient and develop young Americans, who shall be imbued with the spirit of the Fathers and at the same time sensitive to the new conditions, problems, and aspirations of their own time. English is not English which does not finally result in a finer, truer, and larger Americanism on the part of those who study it, and that is an inadequate program which does not recognize and provide for this fact. We have no more important task than that of finding and learning how to use the material suitable. We must train Americans for their place in the world today.